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Letter dated 15 August 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 12 August 2011, addressed to you by Mr. Sertaç Güven, Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I would be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 43, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ertuğrul **Apakan**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 15 August 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to convey herewith a copy of the letter dated 11 August 2011 addressed to you by His Excellency Dr. Derviş Eroğlu, President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see enclosure).

I would be grateful if the text of the present letter and its enclosure could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 43, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Sertaç **Güven**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

Enclosure

You must no doubt be aware of the recent official statements by the Greek Cypriot side announcing that drilling for underwater natural resource exploration to the south of the island will commence at the beginning of October. In this connection, I would like to bring the following to your kind attention.

At the outset, I wish to reiterate that the Greek Cypriot administration, which purports to be the "Government of the Republic of Cyprus", has no legal or moral right to represent or act on behalf of the Turkish Cypriot people or the whole island. This also extends, inter alia, to the signing, by the Greek Cypriot administration, of bilateral agreements with the countries of the region, particularly agreements related to sovereignty, such as the delimitation of maritime jurisdiction areas or exclusive economic zones and conducting oil/natural gas exploration activities in the eastern Mediterranean before the settlement of the Cyprus issue.

As the politically equal co-founding partner of the 1960 Republic of Cyprus, destroyed by the Greek Cypriots in the name of union with Greece, the Turkish Cypriots, who will again be the political equal of the Greek Cypriots in any future comprehensive settlement, certainly have an equal right and say on the natural resources of Cyprus, including in sea areas of the island. It is also an established understanding in the negotiations, including the current process, that issues related to the delimitation of maritime jurisdiction areas of the island of Cyprus will be left to the discretion of the new partnership government, where Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots will share power on the basis of political equality.

It will be recalled that the attempts by the Greek Cypriot administration to create a fait accompli in the eastern Mediterranean through unilateral acts such as delimitation of maritime jurisdiction areas and the conducting of oil/natural gas exploration activities have already been brought to your attention through our repeated representations. As is known, the Greek Cypriot administration signed maritime delimitation agreements with Egypt as early as 2003, with Lebanon in 2007 and with Israel on 17 December 2010, to which both the Turkish Cypriot side and Turkey have registered their objections with the United Nations.

It has also been put on record that, in accordance with international law, the Greek Cypriot administration has no right to conclude bilateral agreements to delimit maritime jurisdiction zones, or to conduct exploratory surveys or drilling activities in the eastern Mediterranean. As known, the delimitation of the continental shelf or the exclusive economic zone in a semi-enclosed sea, such as the eastern Mediterranean, can only be effected by the agreement of all parties and taking into account the rights and interests of all concerned under international law.

In spite of the foregoing, our legitimate objections and warnings have gone unheeded and the Greek Cypriot administration has continued its unilateral acts, violating the legitimate rights of the Turkish Cypriot people, challenging neighbouring countries' maritime jurisdiction areas and, thus, threatening to undermine stability in the eastern Mediterranean.

The latest announcement by the Greek Cypriot administration to the effect that drilling for natural resource exploration to the south of the island is scheduled to start in October 2011 has taken the Greek Cypriot provocations in this respect to a new and dangerous level. At a time when negotiations are continuing to determine the future of the island together, such unilateral acts, apart from escalating tension,

have a serious negative impact on the ongoing process, adversely affecting the atmosphere between the two negotiating parties. I am sure you will agree that the timing of this act is particularly unfortunate, as it coincides with a critical, perhaps even decisive, phase of the negotiations, as we prepare for the tripartite meeting in October under your auspices. What is more, exploration and exploitation of offshore hydrocarbon resources by the Greek Cypriot administration cannot be simply viewed or presented as mere economic activities amid the current negotiation process, since such activities have the potential to fundamentally change the parameters on the ground and destroy the existing window of opportunity for a comprehensive solution.

I wish to reiterate that the recent provocative actions and statements of the Greek Cypriot side are casting serious doubts on its sincerity to negotiate and conclude a comprehensive settlement in the foreseeable future. I hope that the international community, in awareness of the above, uses its influence to convince the Greek Cypriot side to cease its unilateral activities regarding the natural resources of the island until the achievement of a mutually agreed settlement on the island and to adopt a more constructive attitude. Moving contrary to this path will serve no other purpose than increasing tension and damaging prospects for a settlement.

As the Turkish Cypriot side, we are determined to continue our constructive stance and to direct all our efforts towards concluding the present negotiating process with a mutually acceptable comprehensive settlement. I sincerely believe that a final solution of the Cyprus question is within our reach under your mission of good offices if the Greek Cypriot side decides to reciprocate in the same spirit, instead of engaging in activity that is not compatible with this objective.

(*Signed*) Derviş **Eroğlu**
President